6: Gazetteer G-5 (ca. 1840-1883) 1883-4 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

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Chapter, III, D. Village Communities and Tenures.

general opinion is that no outsider can get a share of the water of a canal, except from the body of old shareholders. The State in a *Khálsa kothí*, or the Thákur in a *jágír kothí* could not give a share; practically, therefore, their power of approvement of the waste is limited unless a new canal can be made.

Begár or forced abour demandable from landholders in Láhaul.

Mr. Barnes describes the system of forced labour or *begár* prevailing everywhere in the hills, and mentions that it is one of the conditions of the tenure by which all proprietors hold land of the State in the hills. The forced labour which falls upon the Láhaulís is peculiarly heavy, as their country is a highway used by many travellers and officials on tour, and is surrounded by high snowy mountains and large tracts of elevated waste. The demand all occurs within the six months of summer, the time within which all field-work and all trading journeys have to be done. It is distributed equally on each *jeola* or holding, but at times it may be ruinous to certain families to have to give perhaps their only man; or there may be none at home, all being away engaged in the carrying trade between Tibet and Kúlu, in which almost all Láhauli landholders are concerned. The arrangements which have grown up owing to these difficulties, and which have now become fixed institutions, deserve to be briefly described. For the periodical repairs of roads a man is demanded from every house; for the carriage of travellers' baggage a man is taken from every *jeola*, or full allotment of land only, and the demand for supplies of all kinds required for travellers is distributed in the same way. Each *kothá* or group of *kothís* repairs certain lengths of highway, and carries baggage, and furnishes supplies for the stage nearest to it to travellers merely moving about the valley. The four *kothís* of Rangloi unite to undertake the carriage from Láhaul over the Rhotang Pass into Kúlu. There remains the most difficult task of all, that is, the providing supplies and carriage to travellers wishing to leave Láhaul for Ladákh, Spiti, Zánskár or Chamba by the Bará Lachá, Shinkál or Kukti Passes, which are all over 16,000 feet in height, and involve a camping out for several nights in the wastes. For the work of these passes the ten *kothís* of Gára and Pattan have put themselves on a common roll or roster. Each *kothí* keeps an account with the other *kothís* of its contributions, and within each *kothí* each holding keeps an account with the other holdings. If a holding cannot furnish its man in its turn, a substitute is sent, and there are fixed sums which the defaulting holding is obliged to pay to the substitute (in addition to the pay which he gets from the travellers), as follows:—

Name of route.	Sum payable to the substitute.
To Bapahá, over the Bára Lácha	Three rupees cash, 70lbs barley meal, 1 pair boots, butter 2lbs.
To Spiti, over the Bára Lácha ...	Rupees 2 cash, 56lbs barley meal, 1 pair boots, butter 2lbs.
To Zánskár, over the Shinkál ...	Rupees 2 cash, 28lbs barley meal, 1 pair boots, 2lbs butter.
To Chambá, over the Kukti ...	Rupees 2 cash, 28lbs barley meal, 3 pairs plaited straw sandals.

6: Gazetteer G-5 (ca. 1840-1883) 1883-4 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

Chapter III, D.

Village Communities and Tenures.

Begár or forced labour demandable from landholders in Láhaul.

The demand by travellers for pack horses over the Bára Lácha and Shinkál is in the same way borne rateably by the ten *kothís*, and within the *kothís* by the different holdings. The defaulting *kothí* or landowner pays the owner of the substitute pony a considerable sum in cash at rates fixed for the different journeys.* Defalcations are numerous and the accounts therefore perplexing. It is the custom, therefore, for each *kothí* to appoint by vote an elder to represent the *kothí* in the committee of *begár* accounts. He is called the *siyáná* and gets Rs. 6 cash per annum from the common account, and is himself excused all *begár*. To collect and store supplies in readiness for travellers, and to keep the account of the store, two men are selected year by year in each *kothí* under the name of *talabdár*. They get no pay, but are excused their turn of the *begár* while in office. The above regulations apply to the regular landholders; they appear to have been made by the people themselves under general pressure put upon them by the authorities. In Pattan there are some Dágí families who hold *chetís* or small allotments of land rent-free from the State, on condition of stacking wood at certain halting places.

Sub-divisions in Spiti, and nature of township and villages.

There are five *kothís* in Spiti—Todpá, Barjik, Shám, Chuzí and Pín; the four first are in the main valley, the fifth includes the whole valley of the Pín river, and is shut off from the rest of Spiti by high mountains, except where the river forces its way through a deep narrow gorge to join the main stream. The name Todpá means head of the valley, Barjik the centre, and Shám the lower end, and these *kothís* divide the main valley between them accordingly. The name Chuzí implies endowment or assignment to religious uses, and the *kothí* consists of the villages scattered here and there over the whole length of valley. Again, in a few cases, different holdings in the same village belong to different *kothís*. It is hardly necessary to add that there are no boundaries between *kothis* in the waste, except perhaps in the case of Pín. A kind of boundary will be found to exist between villages which are not separated by any large expanse of waste; that is, such villages have loosely recognized limits within which both exercise separately the right of grazing cattle or cutting grass and wood; but even where such limits are clearest, they do not imply a full property of the soil. The right of the State to grant new holdings in such waste, if it could give water by making a new canal, would not be disputed; and where the villages, as is often the case, are far apart, there are no boundaries between them of any kind.

Form of holding of fields and nature of tenure of waste and arable lands.

The form of tenure of the fields attached to the villages is the same as in Láhaul. Each field belongs to a separate estate or house, and with other fields forms its allotment supposed to have been originally conferred by the States and to be now independently held of it.† Owing to the custom of primogeniture which prevails these allotments are never sub-divided. The water available for irrigation

* Of the ten *kothis* two have no ponies, being on the south side of the Chandra, so they of course default each time.

† *Zing kom* is a local word used to describe such an allotment. A *zing kom chenpá* or full allotment, varies from three to seven acres in extent according to quality of the soil. Some few families only hold a half allotment or *zing khom fikn*.

6: Gazetteer G-5 (ca. 1840-1883) 1883-4 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

CHAPTER V.

ADMINISTRATION.

SECTION B.—LAND AND LAND REVENUE.

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Nature of rent or land-tax under the Rájas in Láhaul.

The whole of Láhaul appears to have been at one time portioned out among a few petty barons or Thákurs, who were the lords of whom the *yulfa* or villagers held their holdings. Four of these baronial families have survived up to the present day, two in full and two in partial possession of their estates; the rest are said to have been gradually extirpated by the Rájas of Kúlu. Under the Rájas the Thákurs were allowed to exist supreme in their own estates, but paid a heavy annual tribute or *nazarána* for them in the shape of a certain number of ponies, pieces of cloth, &c. In the rest of the country, *i.e.*, the *khálsa* or royal *kothís*, the Rája took the place of the extinct Thákurs, and managed them through an official with the rank of a *wazír*. The Thákurs, with a following of their tenants, and one man for each holding in the royal *kothís*, were compelled to attend the Rája at his capital Sultánpur for the six winter months of the year, and do any service, menial or military, which might be committed to them. This was the origin of the present annual emigration of a very large part of the Láhaul population to their winter quarters in Akhára, a suburb of Sultánpur. The *tal* or land-revenue of Láhaul was taken in fixed items of cash, grain, and cloth, levied at equal rates on all the *jeolas* in each *kothí*. This was the rule, but sometimes some small difference of rate prevailed between different villages with regard to difference of soil or water-supply. Another item of revenue was the *chatrí* or colts; a filly belonged to the owner of the mare, but all colts born in Láhaul went to the Rája in *khálsa*, and to the Thákur in *jágír kothís*.

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Sikh revenue administration, and arrangements made at Summary and Regular Settlements (Láhaul).

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When the Sikhs ousted the Rája of Kúlu, they collected the cash and grain from the *khálsa kothís*, and the *nazaránas* from the Thákurs as before; but on the pretence that they did not demand any service of either Thákur or landholder, they imposed an additional cess, under the name of *betangná* of rupees six per *jeola* on every holding, whether in the *khálsa* or the *jágír kothís*. When three years later we took over the country from the Sikhs, we found it nominally assessed at Rs. 5,000, which included grazing dues on foreign sheep and fines, besides land-revenue. This was reduced to Rs. 4,200 at once, next year to Rs. 3,200, and at Regular Settlement to Rs. 2,150, of which Rs. 240 were tribute payable by the Thákurs, and Rs. 1,910 regular land-revenue. When, however, this last sum came to be distributed by the people themselves over the *jeolas* of the *khálsa kothís*, it proved to be in excess of the old fixed cash assessment, and the landholders were not apparently informed that the old grain assessment, and other items were abolished. They, therefore, argued among themselves that the excess

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must be considered as part of the Sikh *beṭonṇwá*, and distributed it equally on all *jeolas*, whether in *jágír* or *khálsa kothís*. In this way, on account of this excess, a sum of Rs. 150 out of the Rs. 1,910 was made payable by the Thákurs, who raised the money and something to spare, by imposing a new cess on the *jeolas* in their *jágírs*. The *khálsa jeolas* paid each their old cash assessment, plus a rateable share of the rest of the excess. No notice was taken in practice of the *khewat* or rent-roll, which had been made out by the *tahsíldár* of Kúlu under Mr. Barnes' orders. All old cesses were lawfully enough collected, as before, in *jágír kothís*, and in *khálsa* ones the *négi*, without authority, maintained most of them as perquisites of his office. Mr. Barnes had appointed one *négi* for the whole of Láhaul (in place of the *wazírs* of the Rájas), and one *lambardár* for each *kothí*. The *panchotra*, or fee ordinarily assigned to *lambardárs*, was divided between them and the *négi*. The first *négi* was a Bráhman of Pattan. It is not surprising that the *khewat* was not accepted by the Láhaulís, for it was in fact in every way a very inaccurate document, besides being in a form not easily to be understood by them. Mr. Barnes was never able to visit Láhaul himself: two or three hill *patwárís*, under no supervision, were sent over the passes, and brought back to the *tahsíldár* what purported to be appraisements of the arable lands held by the several landholders of each *kothí*. From them the *khewat* was made out at Sultánpur. The old cesses were maintained at first even in *khálsa kothís*. About the time when the original *négi* was dismissed and Thákur Tára Chand appointed in his stead, the grain dues ceased to be collected; but the *chatrá* or colts, and the *dhárkar* or *rigatal* (that is, the rents of sheep-runs paid by Gaddís), still continued to go into the *négi's* pocket. In 1862, Mr. Lyall brought the fact to the notice of the Government. In the end the rents of the sheep-runs were formerly granted for life to Tára Chand in recognition of his services. With regard to the colts no decided orders were given; but two or three years ago, when the Government directed the *négi* of Láhaul to discontinue a certain tribute which the Láhaulís had been in the custom of paying through him to the representative of the Maháráját of Jamú in Ladákh, Tára Chand, of his own accord, remitted taking the colts in *khálsa kothís*, on the ground that he had only taken them hitherto as a set-off against the expenses of the tribute in question. Regarding the Regular Settlement, Mr. Lyall writes:—

"The administration papers for the *khálsa kothís* in Láhaul, prepared at Regular Settlement, were on the same model as those for Kúlu. In so far as they have affected the Láhaulís, they might, like the *khewats*, have just as well not been prepared at all. No records were prepared for *jágír kothís*. In them, therefore, in my opinion, the old customary tenure of land remains in force: in the *khálsa kothís* it must be considered to have been to some extent altered by arrangements made at Regular Settlement, and to be that which I have already described, as in my opinion the existing tenure in Kúlu and Seoráj."

Mr. Lyall redistributed Mr. Barnes' assessment, both over *kothís* and over *jeolas* or holdings.

12: Douglas T-3 (1951)1953 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

tery, the lama dances, the Incarnate Lama, and how he was discovered. He told how the Incarnate Lama is first taught the Scriptures—the text of what Buddha said—and then the Commentaries. This religious training is followed by reading, writing, and arithmetic. And when the boy reaches thirteen or fourteen he goes to Lhasa for ten years of indoctrination. Phuntzog, teacher to the present Incarnate Lama, was also teacher, as a young man, to the predecessor Incarnate Lama.

From these topics we turned to Communism, to the relation between the monasteries and the people, and to the host of problems of concern to Ladakh and Lamaism in 1951. The Lobon spoke freely and without restraint about all subjects but one. The one on which he froze was the land problem in Ladakh—the extent of the holdings of the monastery, the work of the lama who serves as the business head of Hemis, the system of land tenancy, and the rents which Hemis as landlord collects. On this subject he was silent.

Then, and at other times when there was a pause, I would bring the conversation back to the Incarnate Lama and Phuntzog's role as teacher. Near the end of our conversation, I told him about one of my own great teachers, Harlan Fiske Stone, who was Dean of the Columbia Law School when I enrolled as a first-year student in 1922. I took my first course in law from him, the course in Personal Property. When I graduated from law school, Stone was an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court. Fourteen years later I joined him there; and in a few years he became Chief Justice. As Chief he presided at our Saturday conferences where all the cases argued during the preceding week were discussd and voted upon. Stone, as is customary with every Chief Justice, stated each case and led the discussion on it. More often than not, Stone and I ended voting together. Sometimes we were on opposite sides of a case. Once when the vote was close, Stone looked down the table at me and said with a twinkle in his eye, "Douglas, I can understand how some of our brethren

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

At the end of two years the lad's head is shaved, all except a piece of hair, which is the rudiment of his pigtail, and which is now carefully preserved, dressed and well-greased with butter; this being an occasion, it is celebrated gastronomically and no doubt alcoholically. 852

We now come to the nuptial ceremonies, but it is quite unnecessary to wait for them till years of discretion have arrived, nor does Cupid have much to do with the wounding of Ladaki hearts, although even here there are occasions when the flight of his arrow is mortal. The women of Ladak enjoy a perennial leap-year, for in this country it is as becoming for a woman to be the aggressor in matters of marriage as it is for a man, and perhaps, in this respect, we are "the wrong way round" after all. When the lady is the active party, the husband brought to her house is called a *magpa*, but if she is taken as a bride to his house, she is called a *gnama*. The property belongs to the active partner, irrespective of sex. 584 591 [421]

Three methods of getting married are sanctioned by custom. The first has of necessity fallen into disuse since the Ladakis were conquered by the Dogras. It was the prerogative of any rajah or ruler, who wished to reward a man for services rendered, to grant him the power of choosing any girl he liked in the country as his bride. Thus a man of low degree could aspire to the hand of a great lady. 583

The second method is frankly to steal the chosen partner. The selection having been made, only relatives are admitted into the secret. No big wedding-feast is prepared, just a small one is made where the native beer or *chang* alone is unlimited. Grand wedding-garments are not permissible, and the actual ceremony is very simple, consisting merely in the bride and bridegroom each donning a very small white head-dress, called the *mgo ras*, while there are no religious rites. The *gnama* or *magpa*, as the case may be, has to say "*zhu-le*" to everybody, friend or no friend, hence the proverb: "The bridegroom or bride must say '*zhu*' even to the cat or dog." 586

24:Peter E-5 (1938)1963 AJ4 West Tibetans AJ4
Ladak

the first one and with mutual consent. The first wife will always have the right to preside over the household, as she is the senior.

If a family has no heirs, it is possible for it to adopt one. This right is practised by persons of both sexes, whether they are married or not. The institution is called *Bu-skal* (*Bu-sKal*) or *Bu-dod* (*Bu-dod*), which words have the significance of "child-instead". The general rule is that the person to be adopted is taken from among the kinsmen of the husband and is married with a girl chosen out of the relatives of the wife. On the other hand, if a girl is adopted from among the relations of the husband, a *mag-pa* must be brought in to her from the agnates of the wife. If the adopted child is taken from a family having no blood relation with the adopting person, *chang* and presentation scarves called *Kha-tag* (*K'ha-bTags*) are offered to the parents and relatives of the person to be adopted. In certain cases, this offer is repeated more than once and *Khatags* are placed on the neck of the person to be adopted and those of his parents again and again until they give way. If the adoption is made from among the kindred, the ceremony of giving *chang* and offering food in a family repast is considered sufficient. The adoption is in most cases recorded in writing in the form of a deed; the person adopting binds himself or herself to recognize the adopted child as his or her only legal heir. Should a child be born to the adopting person after this, the offspring will not be able to take the place of the adopted person, the deed of adoption being irrevocable.

2. *Betrothal and wedding ceremonies*

Betrothal takes place at a very early age in Ladak – usually before ten with regard to the girl, between that age and twelve with regard to the boys. First, horoscopes of the potential candidates are taken, and the parents (or guardians) of the bridegroom or bridegrooms call at the house of the bride to present *chang* and *khatags* to her parents. This ceremony bears the name of *Tri chang* (*Tri-ch'hang*) and in it the petitioning party makes the offer six or seven times to express insistence.

When this part of the proceedings is finished, the parents of the girl accept the request, but demand for themselves and for their daughter more *chang*, tea, butter, *khatags* and food. All relatives of both sides take part in this ritual which is known as *Hol-chang* (*Hol-ch'hang?*) or *Tri-chang chen-mo* (*Tri-ch'hang ch'hen-mo*), "the great ask *chang*".

This is followed by the important *Nyen-chang* (*gNyen-ch'hang*) or "relatives' *chang*". The bride-to-be's relatives receive more *chang*, loaves, meat, tea, butter and *khatags*, as well as the bridegroom's con-

24:Peter E-5 (1938)1963 AJ4 West Tibetans AJ4
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tribution to the dowry, called *Rin-t'ho* (*Rin-t'ho*), "price list". This will eventually constitute part of the wife's own personal property, called *Rag-tag* (*Rag-rTags?*), which can never be included in that of her husband or husbands, except by inheritance after her death. The second part of this ceremony consists in the essential *Go-ras* (*mGo-ras*) or "cotton cloth", the laying of *khatags* on the head of the bride (or brides if a *mag-pa* is married to more than one sister) which is a point of no return. If a betrothal is broken up after this ritual has taken place it is incumbent to act as though a divorce were necessary since the parties are considered to be as good as married. The near relatives of the girl receive more *khatags* from the bridegroom's family, and a piece of cloth is taken to the kitchen where it is tied round one of the pots. Other presents, such as ornaments, cash and turquoises are sometimes added here to the gifts made to the family of the bride.

In return, the visiting party receives a piece of cloth and a dish to take home. The latter will then plan the wedding feast, called *Bag-ston* (*Bag-ston*), in every detail, calculate what the total of the dowry will amount to in *jos* (equivalent to Rupees 4/13/–), and decide the auspicious date upon which the final rites will take place.

If the girl's parents do not give their consent to the marriage of their daughter as they are being requested to do, the boy's or boys' relatives will try and carry off the bride. The ceremony of laying the *go-ras* on her head will take place in the house of a male relative of hers, to whom presents have previously been given, and the marriage will be consummated immediately afterwards. The wife will then be sent home to her parents for some time. After they have been informed of what has happened, and forgiveness for the *fait accompli* has been obtained by repeated offerings of *chang* and *khatags*, the full wedding ceremony will take place. The latter bears the name of *Bag-log* (*Bag-log*) or "return wedding", but the wedding ritual in its entirety is called *Bagma-sbaste* (*Bagma-sBaste*) or "marriage by stealth". The same can apply to a *mag-pa* wedding, when it is called *Magpa-sbaste*.

In the case of adults, the parties themselves arrange for their marriage, and there is no special wedding ceremony. After a period of cohabitation between the partners, the husband (or eldest of them) will visit the parents of the woman and give them *chang* and *khatags* in order to be accepted. Their consent, however, is not necessary for the union to be valid. This procedure is known in Ladak as *Pot'had-mot'had* (*Po-aT'had Mo-aT'had*), "male, female acceptance".

Although it is mainly patrilineal descent which is observed in Ladak